

## **MINUTES**

### **MONTANA SENATE 56th LEGISLATURE - REGULAR SESSION**

#### **COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND CLAIMS**

**Call to Order:** By **CHAIRMAN CHUCK SWYSGOOD**, on February 12, 1999  
at 4:40 P.M., in Room 108 Capitol.

#### **ROLL CALL**

**Members Present:**

Sen. Chuck Swysgood, Chairman (R)  
Sen. Chris Christiaens (D)  
Sen. Eve Franklin (D)  
Sen. Bob Keenan (R)  
Sen. Dale Mahlum (R)  
Sen. Arnie Mohl (R)  
Sen. Debbie Shea (D)  
Sen. Mike Taylor (R)  
Sen. Mignon Waterman (D)

**Members Excused:** Sen. Tom Keating, Vice Chairman (R)  
Sen. Tom A. Beck (R)  
Sen. William Crismore (R)  
Sen. Greg Jergeson (D)  
Sen. J.D. Lynch (D)  
Sen. Ken Mesaros (R)  
Sen. Ken Miller (R)  
Sen. Linda Nelson (D)  
Sen. Daryl Toews (R)

**Members Absent:** None.

**Staff Present:** Shannon Gleason, Committee Secretary  
Clayton Schenck, Legislative Branch

**Please Note:** These are summary minutes. Testimony and  
discussion are paraphrased and condensed.

**Committee Business Summary:**

Hearing(s) & Date(s) Posted: SB 355, 2/12/1999  
Executive Action: None

**Sponsor:** SEN. ARNIE MOHL, SD 39, KALISPELL

**Proponents:** Gary Gilmore, Department of Transportation

**Opponents:** Marga Lincoln, Alternative Energy Resource  
Organization

Craig Sweet

Linda Gryczan, Owner Alice B Toeclips Cyclery

**Opening Statement by Sponsor:**

SEN. MOHL stated this bill was requested by the Department of Transportation and was not an attempt or intend to eliminate funding for footpaths and bike tails. It allowed the required \$200,000.00 to be spend on footpaths to come from other sources than State Special Revenue (SSR). This would allow the SSR funds to be de-earmarked and utilized for the Federal Highway Match program.

**Proponents' Testimony:**

Gary Gilmore, Department of Transportation, thought this bill should be known for what it does do, not what it doesn't do. Mr. Gilmore advised it does not eliminate the foot and bike path program, simply the restrictions where the funds originated. Mr. Gilmore read EXHIBIT(fcs35a01).

**Opponents' Testimony:**

Marga Lincoln, Alternative Energy Resource Organization, read EXHIBIT(fcs35a02).

Craig Sweet stated everyone in the meeting is a pedestrian at some time during the day and uses the facilities. Mr. Sweet advised the committee he was a former city counsel member and was familiar with the funding. Mr. Sweet stated he learned during the original discussions several groups felt the gas tax money should not be used for bike and footpaths, and stated he also learned the quickest way to kill a program it to take away the funding source. Mr. Sweet was worried about the commitment to the bike and footpaths program, and felt these paths were essential as the largest majority of the users were children.

Linda Gryczan read EXHIBIT(fcs35a03) and offered bikes to any of the Legislators who wanted one.

**Questions from Committee Members and Responses:**

**Chairman Swysgood** reminded **Mr. Sweet** of the \$5,000,000.00 commitment by the Department of Transportation. **Mr. Sweet** did feel it was a legitimate commitment. **Chairman Swysgood** then asked if he thought the program would grow if the funds were matched and could be better utilized. **Mr. Sweet** did.

**Closing by Sponsor:**

**SEN. MOHL** noted the \$200,000.00 commitment was not changing, only the source of funding. **SEN. MOHL** noted he wanted to see bike and foot paths throughout the state but felt the SSR money was better utilize elsewhere.

**ADJOURNMENT**

Adjournment: 5:00 P.M.

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SEN. CHUCK SWYSGOOD, Chairman

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SHANNON GLEASON, Secretary

CS/SG

**EXHIBIT (fcs35aad)**